(iv) India also has bilateral trade treaties with Nepal and Bhutan, under which duty-free access has been provided to goods from these two countries, on non-reciprocal basis.

Labelling use of Vanilla products

941. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has a plan for a rescue package for vanilla farmers;

(b) whether Ministry of Health has been asked to make it mandatory to label the use of synthetic vanilla and natural vanilla on the product; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Government has announced a scheme to provide subsidy to the Vanilla Growers under which M/s STCL would procure vanilla beans from growers and would sell the vanillin extracts to the Dairy/Confectionery industry.

(b) and (c) Ministry of Health was requested for marking it mandatory labeling of ice-cream which uses synthetic vanilla or artificial flavour who have informed that under the provisions of Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules, 1955, the label indicating the names of ingredients used in the products in descending order of the composition by weight and volume including all package food and ice cream is mandatory. Products using synthetic vanilla or artificial flavour need to be labeled as "contains artificial flavours".

Support to small tea growers in Assam

942. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the per cent contribution of small tea growers in the overall productivity of the country with special reference to Assam;

(b) the kind of financial and other support Government is extending and proposes to extend towards enhancing quality production by small tea growers in Assam;

(c) the major constraints of small tea growers in their rapid growth and sustenance; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to mitigate their problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) The contribution from small tea growers to the national tea production is around 250 million kgs and it accounts for nearly 25% of the all India tea production of which 10% is accounted for by small growers in Assam.

(b) In order to harness the potential economic value of the small grower sector, the measures adopted by Government are aimed at improving their farm productivity and quality of their produce, and then providing them with a market access to ensure a reasonable return from their investments. Focused attention is being paid to organize the growers into Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Financial assistance is being extended to them facilitating establishment of proper leaf collection system, transport arrangements and establishing proper partnership arrangements with the quality tea processing factories.

(c) The major constraints of small tea growers are small fragmented holdings scattered in remote areas not having land ownership, not conversant with good agricultural practices and not having their own processing facility.

(d) The self help groups are provided with 100% grant for setting up of leaf collection centers, storage godowns, purchasing Leaf weighing scales, Plastic crates/nylon leaf carry bags. Transport vehicles are provided at 50% of the cost. Each SHG is provided with a revolving fund @ Rs. 10,000/- ha for meeting the cost of field inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, sprayers etc. A special training on modern aspects of tea growing is organized for selected two members from each self help groups who in turn on completion of the training are expected to impart training to other members of the SHG and also take care of the management of the tea area under the command of the SHG. Besides Meeting the training fee and boarding and lodging cost, each trainee is Provided with stipend @ Rs.500/- per month for next six months from the date of completion of the training.

Status of Care-Keralam project

943.SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Competent Authority of Kerala had submitted detailed project report related to Care-Keralam (Confederation for Ayurvedic Renaissance-Kerala) during January, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Competent Authority *vide* latter dated July, 2005 had informed the Competent Authority of Kerala that the proposal had been approved by the Inter-Ministerial Apex Committee;

(d) if so, whether the sanction order had been issued and the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and the steps taken for issuing above sanction order?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Sir.